



US005871305A

United States Patent [19]
Allen

[11] **Patent Number:** **5,871,305**
[45] **Date of Patent:** **Feb. 16, 1999**

[54] **ACTIVE COOLING SYSTEM BOOM**

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[21] Appl. No.: **901,577**

[22] Filed: **Jul. 28, 1997**

[51] **Int. Cl.⁶** **E02B 15/04**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **405/70; 405/63**

[58] **Field of Search** 405/63, 70; 210/241,
210/242.1, 242.2, 242.3; 441/66, 30

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

Provided in accordance with the present invention, is a preferred embodiment of a boom for use in or containing, concentrating, and burning oil on the surface of a body of water. The boom includes a series of flotation sections, having an average density substantially less than that of water for providing flotation. The boom also includes a water distribution system at least partially surrounding one or more flotation sections. The water distribution system includes material substantially permeable to the water, for receiving, absorbing, and distribution of the water for heat protection. The boom additionally includes a pressurized fluid system/structure for placing the water distribution system in fluid communication with a supply of pressurized water. The pressurized fluid system includes at least one fluid conduit, extending for substantially the length of the boom. The conduit includes an end adapted for connecting to an external source of pressurized water. In operation, the conduit delivers the water along the boom's length, to the water distribution system.

20 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets

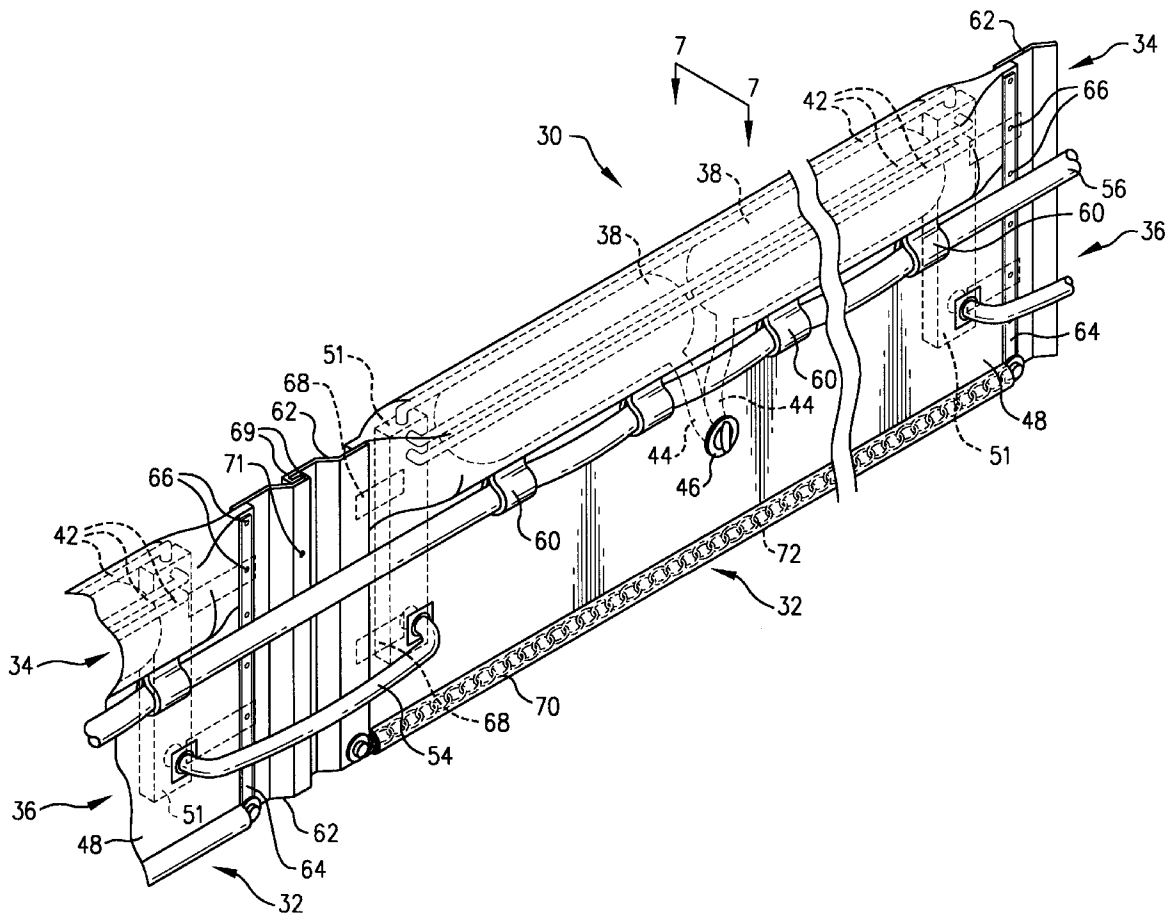


FIG. 1

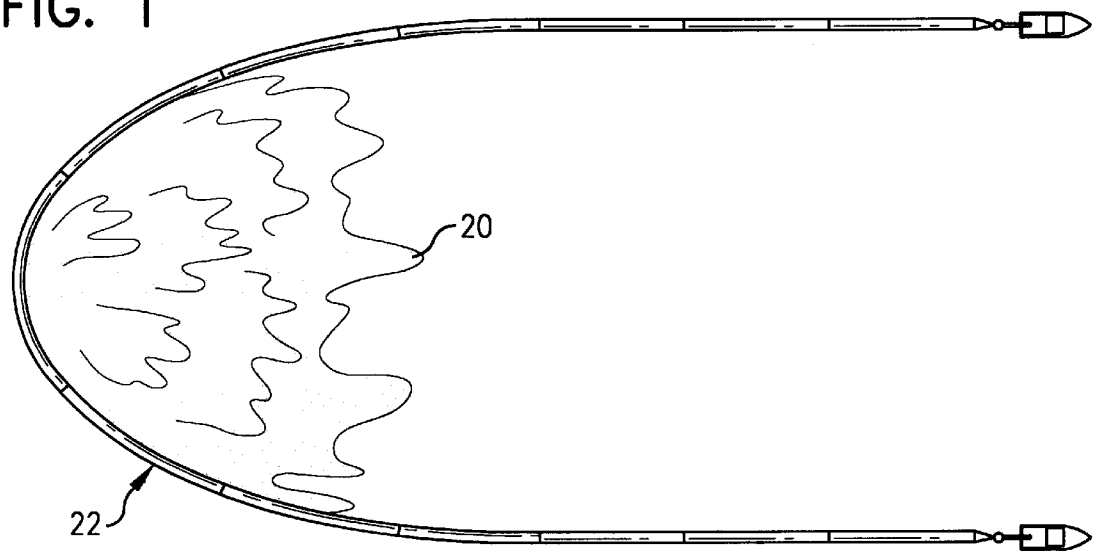
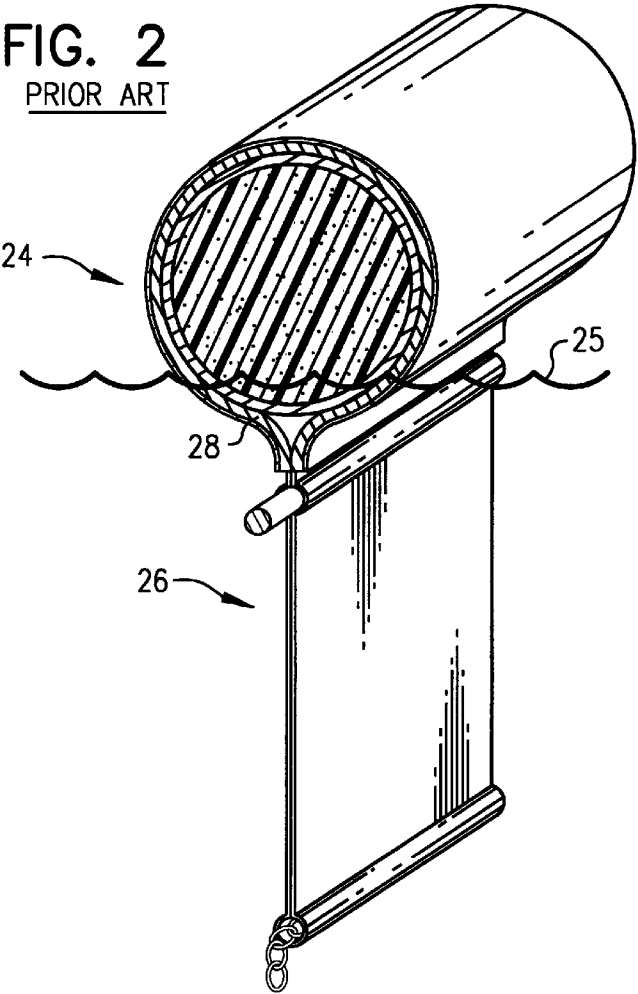


FIG. 2
PRIOR ART



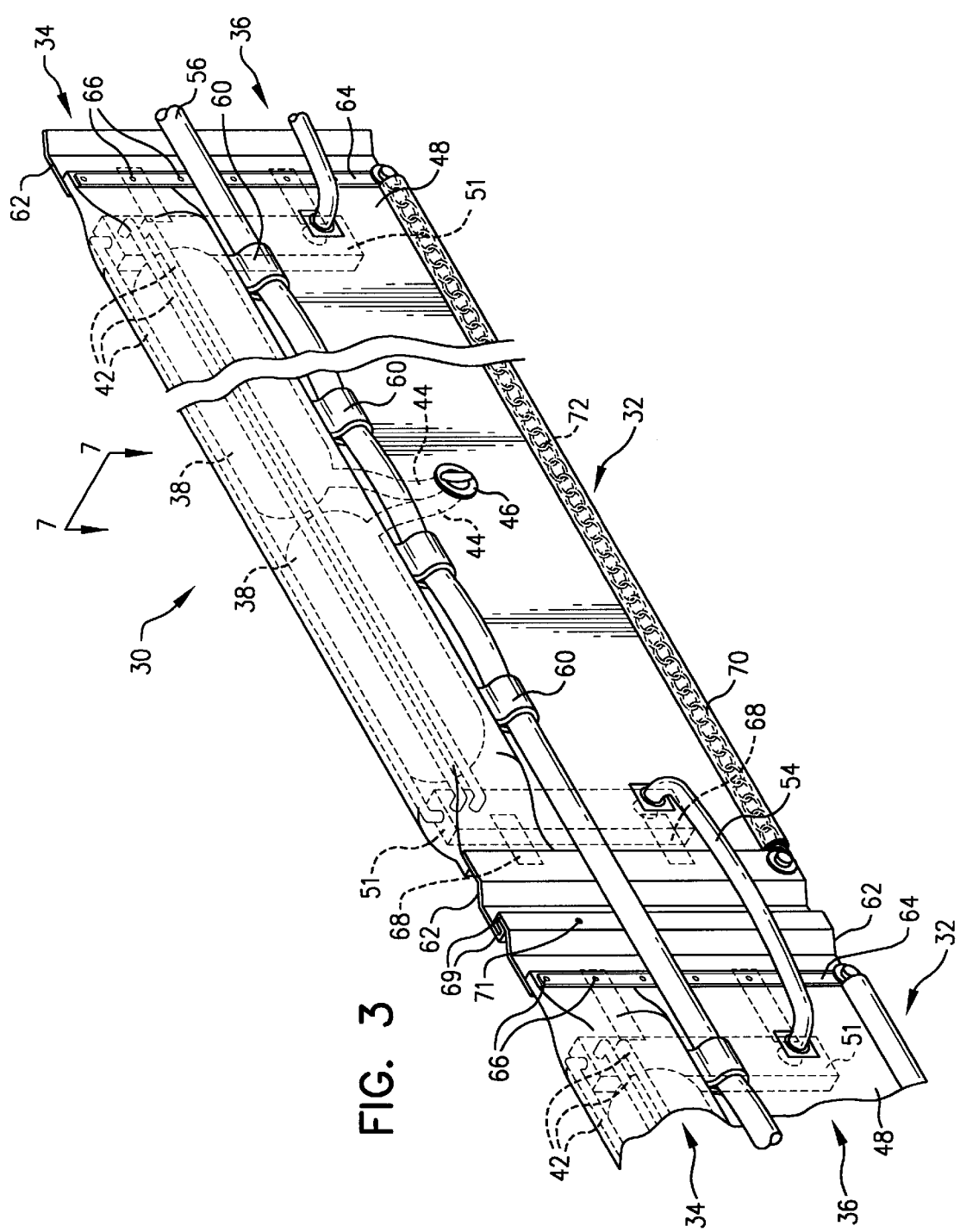


FIG. 3

FIG. 4

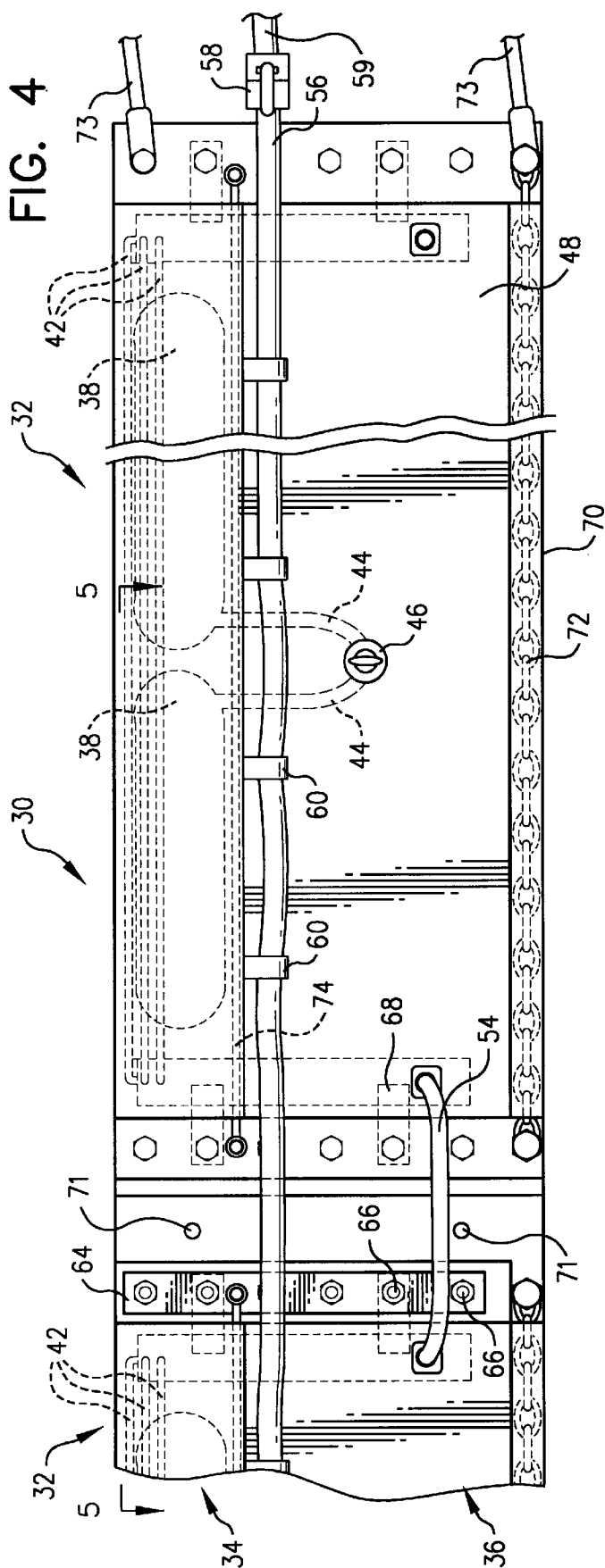


FIG. 5

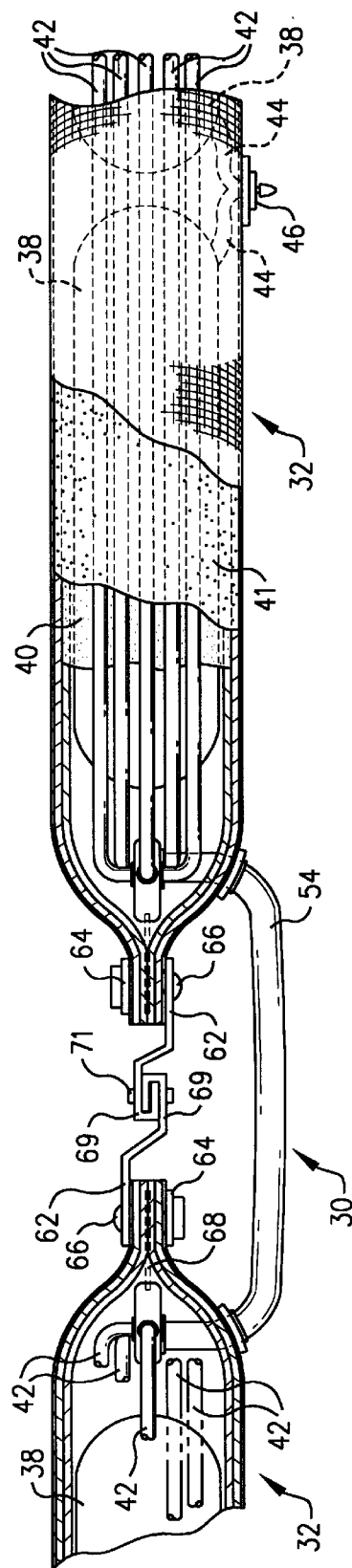


FIG. 6

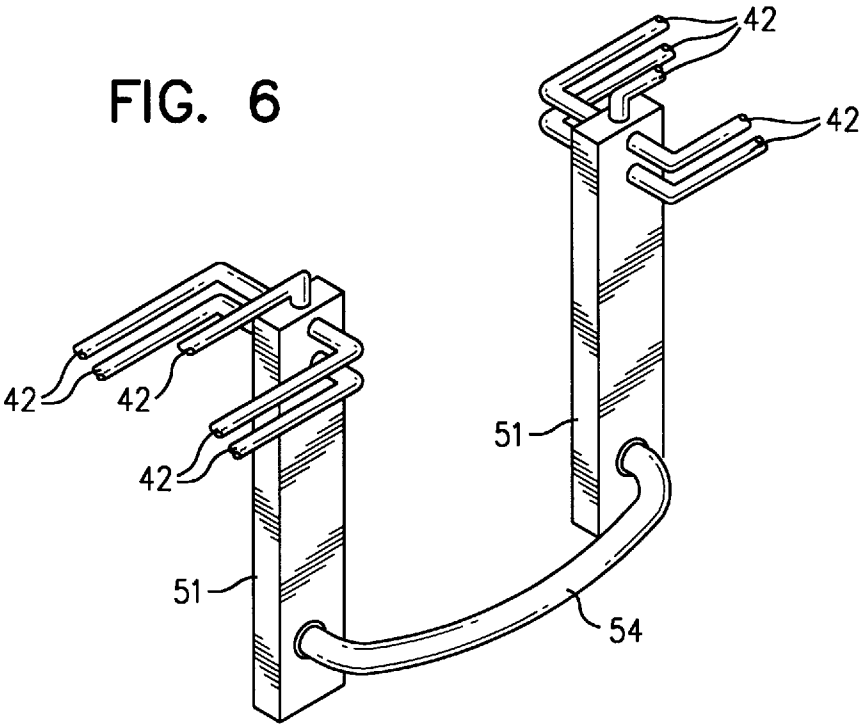
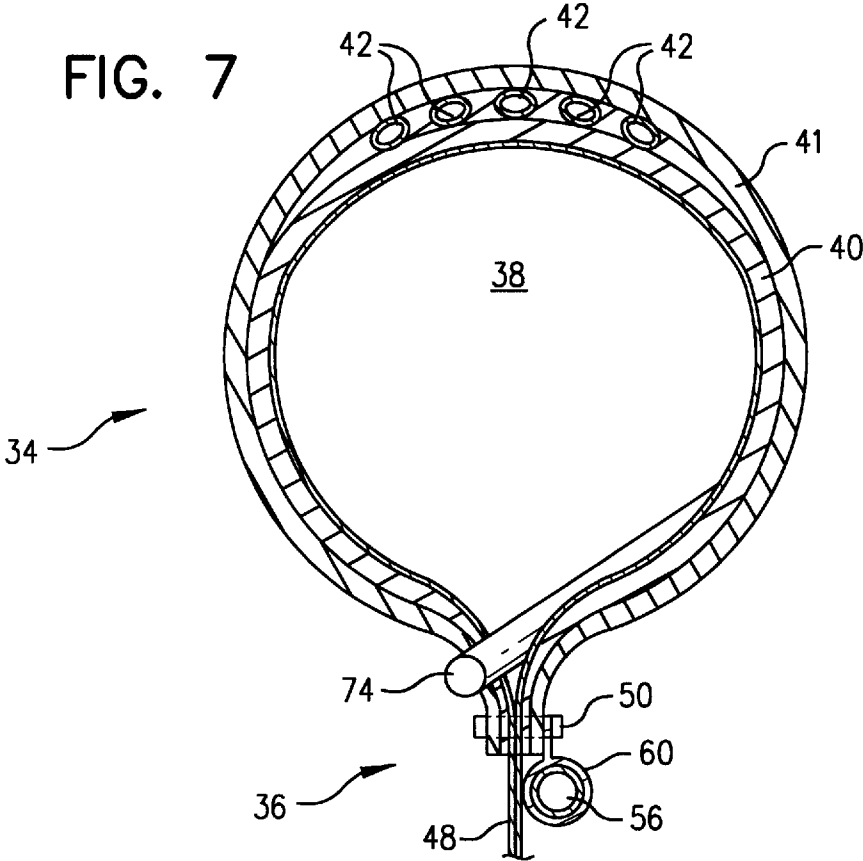


FIG. 7



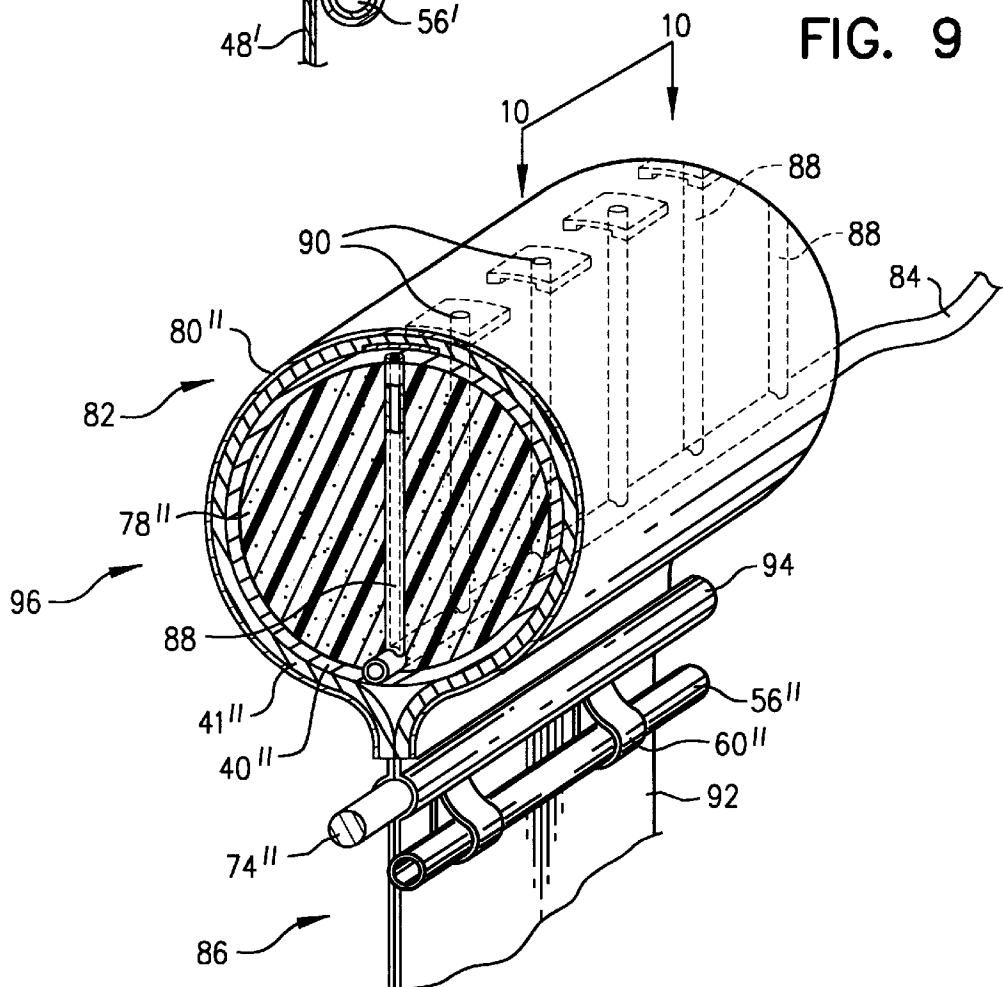
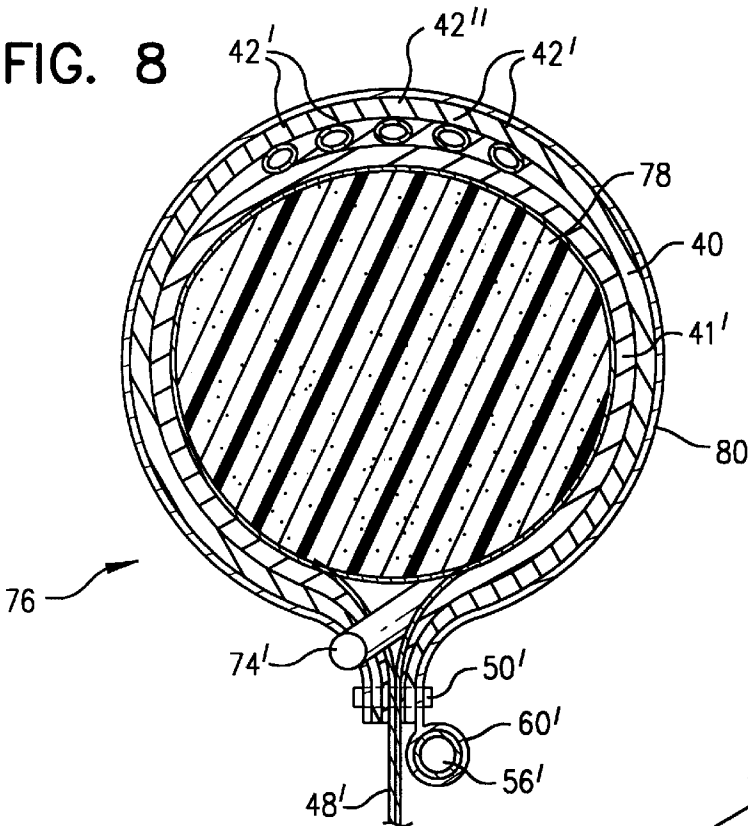


FIG. 10

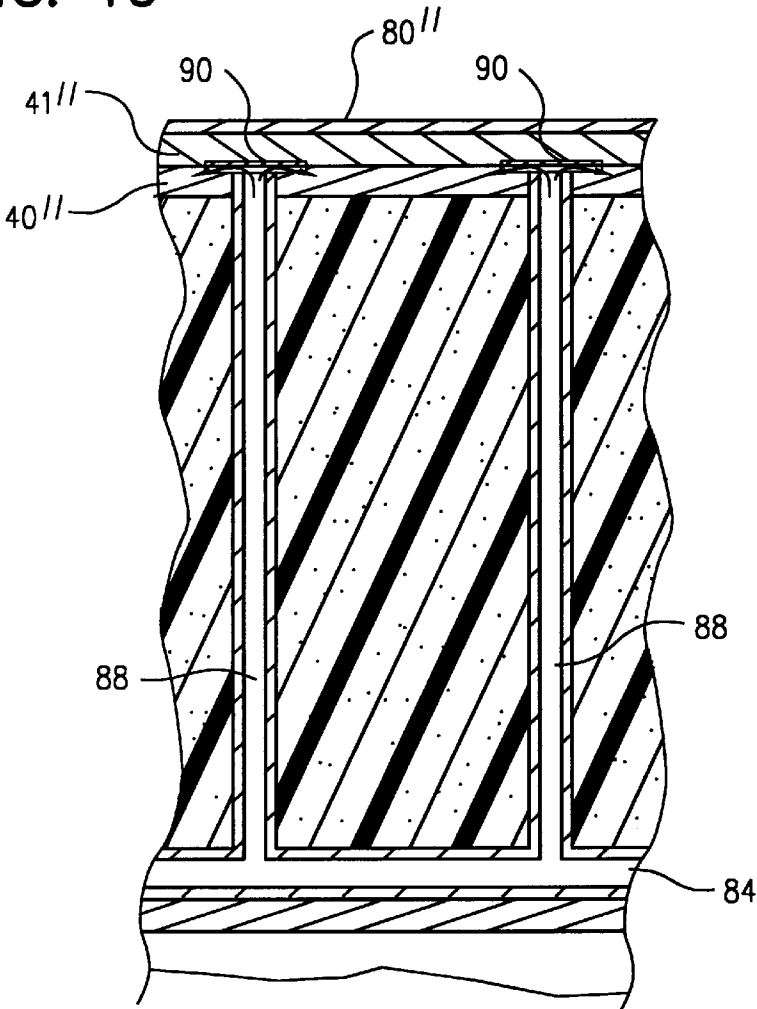


FIG. 11

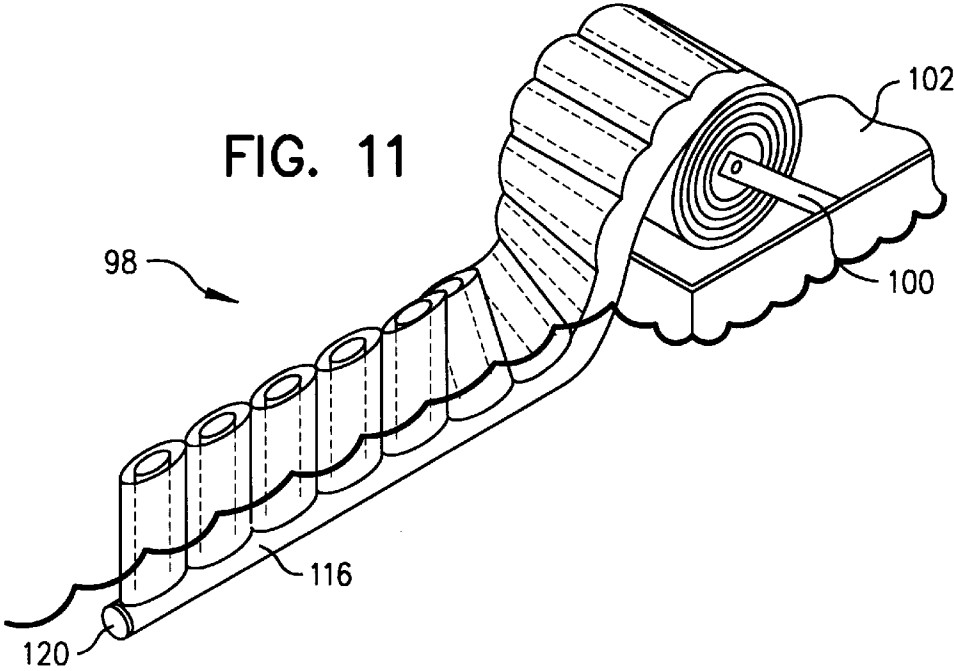


FIG. 12

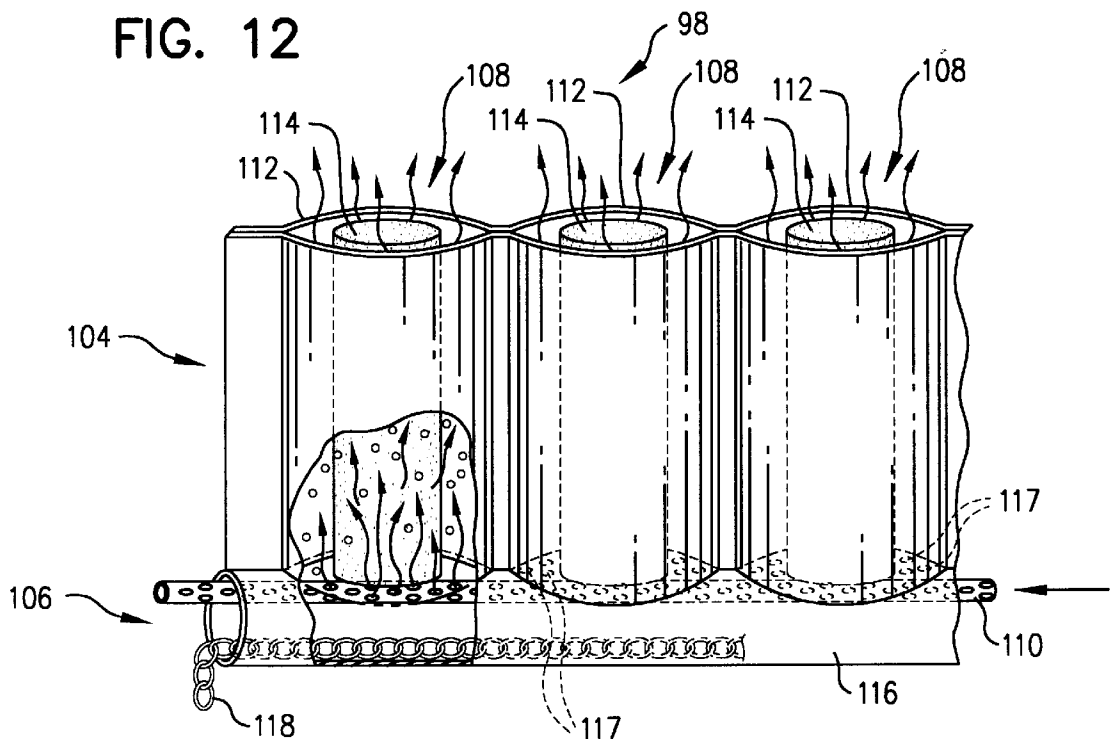


FIG. 13

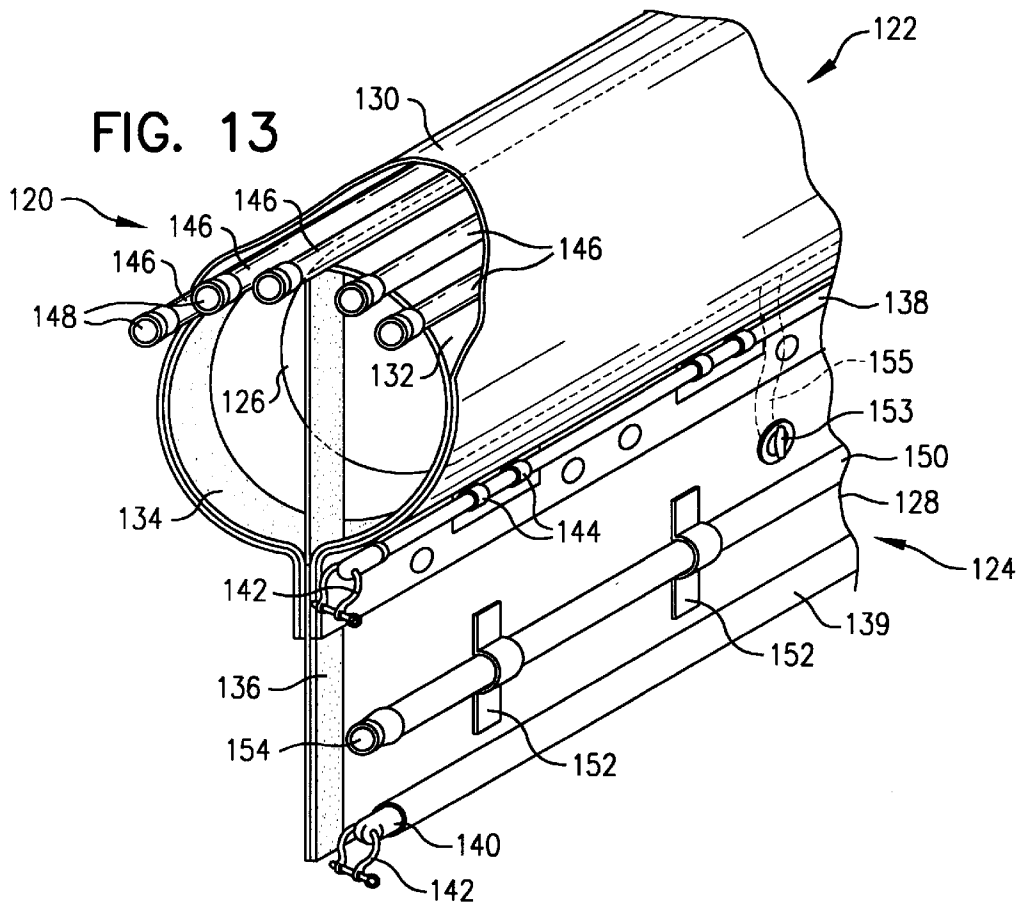


FIG. 14

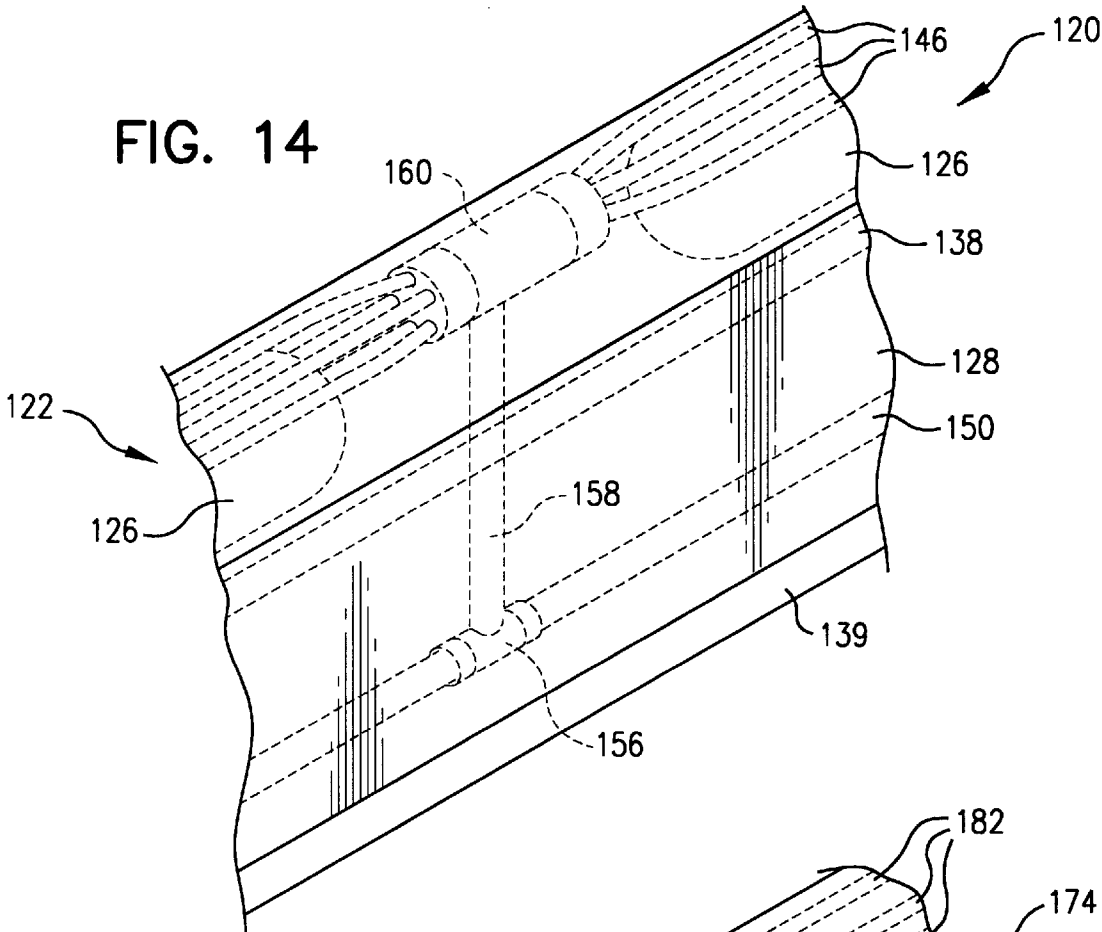
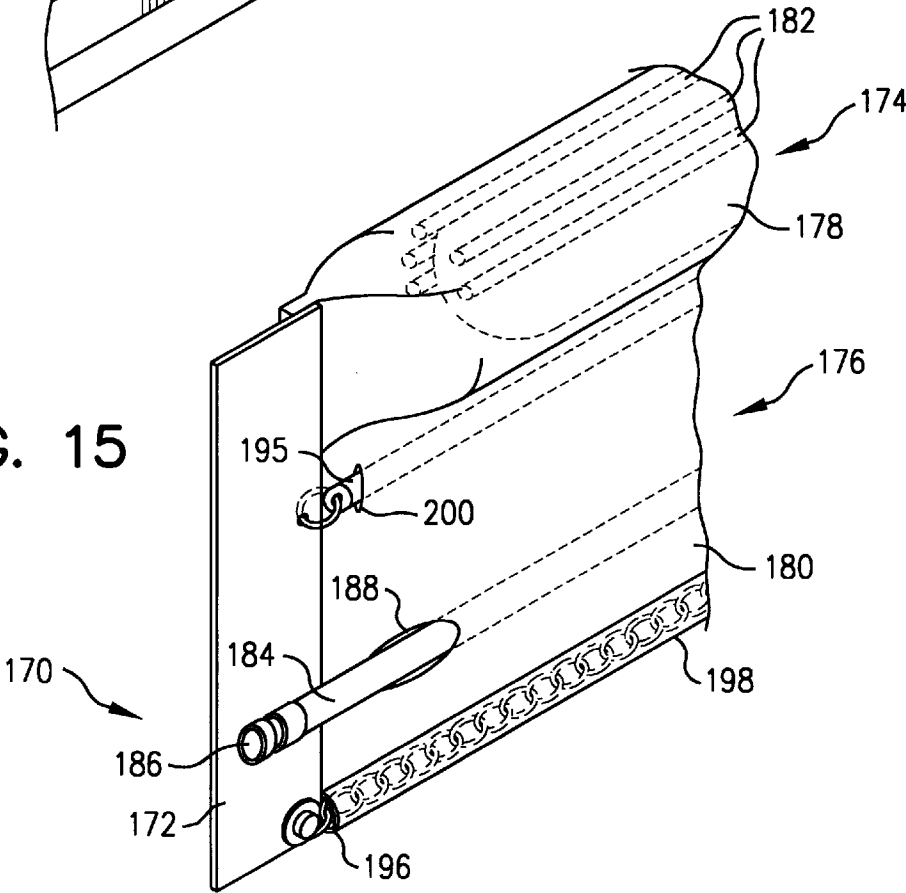
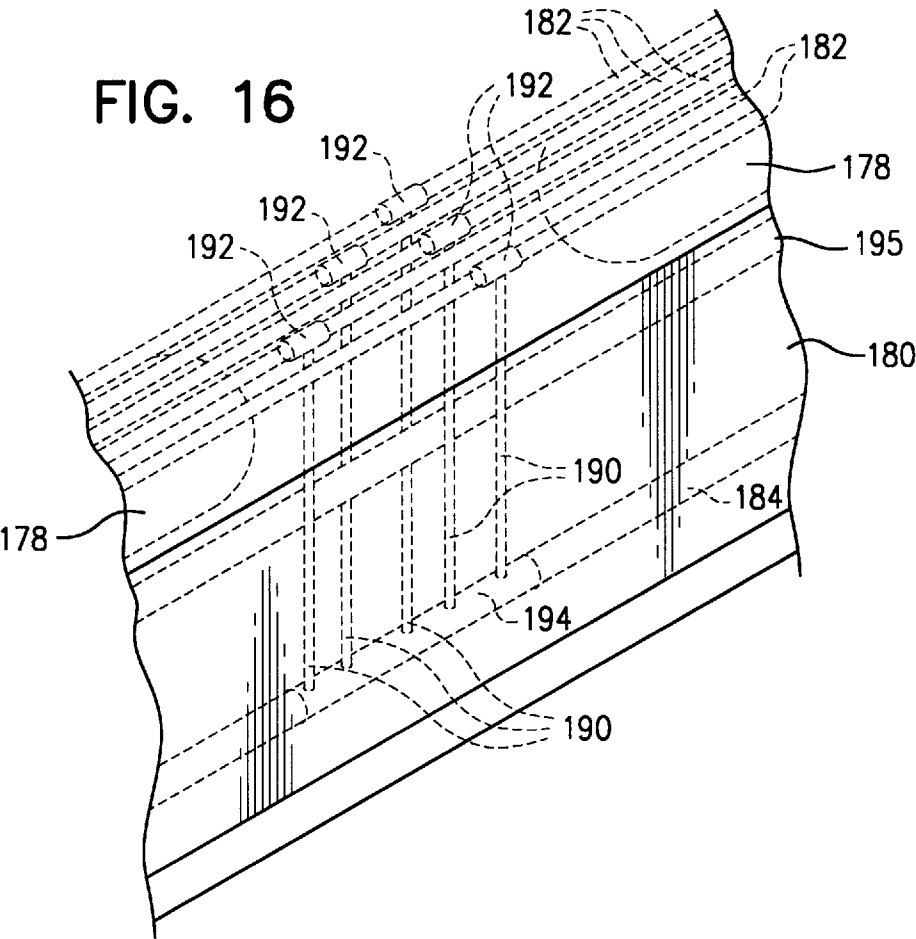


FIG. 15





ACTIVE COOLING SYSTEM BOOM

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to oil spill containment booms for flotation on a body of water, and in particular, to fire-resistant booms for the containment and controlled combustion of oil and other pollutants on the water's surface.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Oil spills pose a major environmental threat to our increasingly urbanized world. Contamination of water and shoreline areas by even relatively modest amounts of oil can result in disastrous environmental consequences. In the environment, oil dissipates slowly over time and can cause significant adverse impacts for years unless cleaned up.

In response to an oil spill, clean-up personnel generally focus on cleaning up the spilled oil before the oil drifts ashore. Cleaning up an oil spill at sea dramatically reduces the risk of the spill impacting human population centers and other natural resources generally found in nearshore/shoreline environments. The adverse impact of an oil spill can thus often be significantly alleviated if the oil can be cleaned up before it reaches shoreline areas.

Cleaning up an oil slick floating on the surface of a body of water poses difficult problems. One attempted solution has been the use of ship-mounted oil containment and recovery systems (i.e., conventional booms and skimmers). Such recovery systems attempt to remove oil from the water's surface using direct suction devices, hydrodynamic planes, and a variety of oleophilic (oil-attracting) surfaces.

While satisfactory for some applications, such mechanical recovery systems generally require a great deal of logistical support, have relatively low oil recovery rates, and often pick up substantial volumes of water as well. The physical recovery of spilled oil with such skimming devices requires the use of large storage containers for the recovered oil and water, oil/water separation systems, and the provision of oil and oily waste disposal systems for the recovered fluids.

Many oil spill situations cannot be controlled adequately or in a timely manner with mechanical skimmers alone. The controlled burning of spilled oil in place (i.e., in-situ) with a fire-resistant boom provides an effective means of eliminating large volumes of oil quickly, with minimal logistical support, and without the need for large oil/water storage systems.

FIG. 1 illustrates spilled oil **20** floating on the surface of a body of water, being contained with a fire-resistant floating boom structure **22**. Personnel maneuver the boom **22** into a shape corresponding generally to the letter "U", and contain and concentrate the spilled oil **20** (and/or other pollutants) between the legs of the U-shaped configuration. Once the oil has been sufficiently concentrated in the apex of the boom, personnel may ignite the oil using any of a number of aerial or surface ignition systems. The burning substantially consumes the oil, typically 90% to 98% of the contained oil, minimizing the risk of environmental damage. Unfortunately, the heat from the burning oil creates enormous thermal stress on the containment boom (typically 1800° to 2000° F.) which under wind and wave conditions may cause the rapid deterioration of even high temperature-resistant materials used in forming such booms.

Referring to FIG. 2, an oil containment boom **22** usually includes two main components: (i) a buoyant portion **24** extending above the water's surface **25** for flotation and to

keep oil from splashing over the boom; and (2) a skirt or ballast portion **26** extending below the water's surface to prevent oil from escaping beneath the boom. Heat from the burning oil will typically impact the buoyant portion, and not the skirt/ballast portion as the skirt and ballast components generally remain submerged below the water's surface.

With continued reference to FIG. 2, one attempted solution for protecting fire-resistant containment booms from heat damage involves a cooling layer **28** in or between portions of the buoyant portion **24**. The cooling layer is formed from a water absorbent material, in contact with the water. The cooling layer absorbs water, drawing moisture around the buoyant portion, against the influence of gravity, due to wicking. This moisture then functions for protecting the boom from heat.

While perhaps satisfactory in some applications, such passive cooling due to wicking generally provides insufficient heat protection. In particular, such passive cooling does not draw enough moisture, and/or does not draw the moisture upward far enough against gravity, along the buoyant portion to provide sufficient heat protection. That is, heat from burning oil still significantly damages such booms, even when the booms are made of high-temperature resistant materials. After use in an oil-burning operation, such booms normally require replacement and/or substantial repair.

The present invention provides an improved solution.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Provided in accordance with the present invention, are preferred embodiments of booms for deployment on the surface of a body of water. The booms each include features suiting them for use in containing spilled oil and/or other pollutants floating on the water's surface. In particular, the booms include active cooling systems for heat protection when using the booms for the burning of contained oil on the water's surface.

The booms all include at least one flotation section. The flotation section has an average density substantially less than that of water for providing flotation for the boom. For achieving the requisite average density, the flotation sections preferably employ foam, and/or an inflatable chamber. Preferably, the booms employ a series of flotation sections, extending along the boom's length.

The booms additionally include a system for receiving and distributing a fluid, preferably water, around the boom for cooling and protection of the boom from heat. The distribution system preferably includes at least one fluid conduit, extending for at least a portion of the boom's length. The conduit connects to an external source of pressurized water, for instance, a pump onboard a boom-towing vessel, and delivers the water along the boom. Preferably, the water is pumped directly from the surrounding fresh or salt-water environment.

In a preferred embodiment, the distribution system includes a substantially hydrophilic material for receiving the pressurized water. The material at least partially surrounds one or more flotation sections in a boom, and absorbs and further aids in distributing the water. In another preferred embodiment, the water distribution system includes a space surrounding a flotation section, wherein water accumulates in this space for providing heat protection.

In other features, the booms include a bottom-tensioned ballast member, preferably a chain. The ballast member provides strength for the boom, and functions in maintaining the boom in proper orientation when deployed on the water's surface.

The present invention thus provides for the containment of burning oil with fire-resistant booms having a pressurized, active water-cooling system for heat protection of above-water components.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The foregoing aspects and many of the attendant advantages of this invention will become more readily appreciated as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following detailed description, when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. 1 schematically illustrates vessels deploying a boom into a U-configuration for the containment of oil and/or other pollutants floating on the surface of a body of water;

FIG. 2 illustrates a perspective view of a portion of an oil containment boom having a passive cooling system for heat protection, with part of the boom shown in cross-section;

FIG. 3 illustrates a perspective view of a portion of a preferred embodiment of a boom in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 4 illustrates a side view of the boom of FIG. 3;

FIG. 5 illustrates a partial, top, cross-sectional view of the boom of FIG. 4, taken along section line 5—5 in FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 illustrates fluid junction boxes from the boom of FIG. 3;

FIG. 7 illustrates a partial cross sectional view of the boom of FIG. 3, taken along section line 7—7 of FIG. 3;

FIG. 8 illustrates a partial cross-sectional view of another preferred embodiment of a boom in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 9 illustrates a partial cross-sectional view of another preferred embodiment of a boom in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 10 illustrates a partial side cross-sectional view of part of the boom of FIG. 8, taken along section line 10—10 of FIG. 9;

FIG. 11 illustrates a perspective view of another preferred embodiment of a boom in accordance with the present invention, shown being deployed from a reel or winch;

FIG. 12 illustrates a side view of part of the boom of FIG. 11, with sections of the side shown removed, illustrating partial cross-sectional views;

FIG. 13 illustrates a perspective view of an end portion of another preferred embodiment of a boom in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 14 illustrates a side view of the mid-portion of a boom section for the apex of the boom of FIG. 13;

FIG. 15 illustrates a perspective view of an end portion of another preferred embodiment of a boom in accordance with the present invention; and

FIG. 16 illustrates a side view of the mid-portion of a section of the boom of FIG. 15.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

FIG. 3 illustrates a perspective view of a portion of a preferred embodiment of a boom 30 in accordance with the present invention. The boom 30 includes features suiting it for use in containing spilled oil and/or other pollutants floating on the surface of a body of water. In particular, the boom 30 includes an active cooling system for heat protection when using the boom for containing, concentrating, and burning oil on the water's surface.

The boom 30 preferably includes shorter boom sections 32, that connect in an end-to-end arrangement for forming the boom (FIG. 3 illustrates end portions of booms sections 32). Thus, if one section 32 becomes damaged, that section can be replaced without requiring replacement of the entire boom. Preferably, the boom sections 32 have lengths in the range from 25 to 150 feet, and most preferably have a length of about 100 feet.

Each boom section 32 includes a buoyant portion 34, and a skirt or ballast portion 36. When the boom 30 deploys on a body of water, the buoyant portion 34 provides flotation, and substantially floats on the water's surface for preventing oil and/or other pollutants from escaping over the boom. The ballast portion 36 extends generally straight down underneath the water's surface, below the buoyant portion 34, for substantially preventing oil from escaping underneath the boom 30.

FIG. 5 illustrates a partial cross-sectional top view of the boom 30. Referring to FIG. 5, the principal components of the buoyant portion 34 include: (i) a series of flotation sections 38 for providing flotation; (ii) a water distribution system in the form of cooling layers 40 and 41 at least partially surrounding each flotation section, for distributing water; and (iii) a pressurized water supply system for connecting the water distribution system to a pressurized supply of water, i.e., at least one fluid conduit 42 for actively supplying water to the cooling layers 40 and 41.

Each flotation section 38 is formed from an air-filled bladder or chamber, forming a segment along the length of the boom section 32. Each segment or chamber preferably has a length from four to six feet, and most preferably has a length of around five feet. The chambers are formed from a sheet of conventional fabric, composed substantially of a polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or a polyurethane material. Preferably the material has a fabric weight in the range of approximately 15 to 30 ounces per square yard, and most preferably, a weight of about 22 ounces per square yard. To form each chamber, the fabric is folded over and heat-sealed together at selected locations.

Preferably, a single sheet of fabric extends for substantially the length of each boom section 32. This sheet forms all of the flotation sections 38 for that particular boom section 32, with air chambers extending along the length of the boom section in a substantially, end-to-end arrangement. A short space separates the end of one air chamber from the next. This spacing enhances flexibility. In response to a passing wave, the boom section 32 can thus flex at the spaces, and undulate with the water's surface. That is, the enhanced flexibility due to spacing between flotation chambers permits the boom section 32 to better "ride over" passing waves.

The fabric defining the flotation chambers additionally defines an air channel 44 for each flotation section 38, for inflating that flotation section chamber with air. The air channels 44 are formed by selectively heat sealing areas of the fabric to define a path of air communication to each flotation section chamber.

As illustrated, the air channels 44 are preferably formed in pairs. Each air channel 44 of a pair, extends from a conventional air valve 46. Each air valve 46 mounts between a pair of flotation sections 38. One channel 44 connects the air valve 46 to one flotation section 38, and the other channel connects to the other section. The valve 46 preferably has different positions for inflating one flotation section 38 or the other; deflating the flotation sections; and/or for sealing the channels 44 for maintaining inflation pressure in the flota-

tion sections. Preferably, the flotation sections **38** are inflated up to about 1 to 3 psi above atmospheric pressure, and most preferably, they are inflated to between 1 and 2 psi above atmospheric pressure.

Referring to FIG. **3**, the valves **46** preferably mount to the ballast portion **36** of each boom section **32**. In particular, the fabric forming the flotation sections **38**, extends downward to form supporting structure for the ballast portion **36**. More particularly, the fabric extends to the bottom edge of the boom section **32**, and forms a depending skirt **48**. The valves **46** for inflating the flotation sections **38**, preferably mount to the skirt **48**, below the water line. In this way, the valves **46** are generally immersed in water for protection from heat.

Returning to FIG. **5**, cooling layers **40** and **41** at least partially surround each flotation section **38**. Preferably, the cooling layers **40** and **41** are each formed from sheets of fabric. Each sheet extends for substantially the length of the boom section **32**. These sheets are formed from a hydrophilic, water absorbing, heat resistant material. The material absorbs water for protecting the boom section **32** from heat. The fabric is preferably a conventional felt material, such as the fabric sold under the trade name NOMEX, manufactured by the duPont Company of Wilmington, Del. Preferably, each sheet is about $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in thickness, and most preferably has a thickness of about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

FIG. **7** illustrates a cross-sectional view of the buoyant portion **34** of a boom section **32**, and the upper part of the ballast portion **36**. Referring to FIG. **7**, the cooling layers **40** and **41** fasten around the sheet forming the flotation sections **38** in an arrangement similar to a French cuff. Specifically, each cooling layer sheet arcs outward, such that the inner surface of each sheet edge faces the skirt **48**, that extends from the bottom of the buoyant portion **34**. Conventional fastening devices **50**, such as rivets, bolts, staples, and/or etc. penetrate through the cooling layer sheet edges and the skirt **48** at intervals along the length of the boom section **32**. The fastening devices **50** maintain the cooling layers **40** and **41** in position, surrounding the flotation sections **38**.

Fluid conduits **42** extend for substantially the length of each boom section **32**. In particular, the fluid conduits **42** extend between the cooling layers **40** and **41** for actively supplying the layers with cooling fluid, preferably water. That is, the conduits **42** function for providing the cooling layers **40** and **41** with a pressurized source of water.

The conduits **42** are preferably manufactured to "weep" fluid into the cooling layers, as with conventional garden hoses used for such weep-type irrigation. This type of hose is fluid permeable, so that water flowing through the hose, "weeps" through the hose walls to the environment. This type of garden hose, for example, is manufactured by the Aquapore Company of Phoenix, Ariz.

Unlike such commercially available garden hoses, though, the conduits **42** are preferably formed from a conventional material, resistant to elevated temperatures. For instance, the conduits **42** may be formed from the material typically employed in hoses for fire fighting. For maintaining proper spacing in the boom section **32**, the conduits **42** are preferably sewn to at least one of the cooling layers **40** or **41**. Alternatively, the conduits **42** may extend through channels formed by selectively sewing of areas of the cooling layers **40** and **41** to one another. The conduits **42** may also be woven into a net extending between the cooling layers **40** and **41**, or embedded into a third layer, for maintaining their positions.

The conduits **42** generally extend along the boom section **32**, to the side of the flotation sections **38**, opposite the

ballast portion **36**. When a boom section **32** deploys, the conduits **42** are thus located above the flotation sections **38**. Under the influence of gravity, fluid from the conduits **42** therefore tends to travel downward through the cooling layers **40** and **41**, around the flotation sections **38**.

The conduits **42** extend along the length of the boom section **32** in a generally spaced apart, side-by-side arrangement. In particular, the conduits **42** are circumferentially spaced at approximately regular intervals, above the top portion of the flotation sections **38**. The spacing centers around the top of the flotation sections **38**, extending for about one-quarter of the distance around the periphery of the flotation sections. The spacing promotes more even distribution of fluid to the cooling layers **40** and **41**, around the sides of the flotation sections **38**.

Referring to FIG. **3**, the conduits **42** originate in a rigid or flexible junction box **51** proximate one end of the boom section **32**, and terminate at a junction box **51** proximate the other end of the boom section. The junction boxes **51** connect the conduits **42** to a pressurized supply of fluid, water, for distributing the water to the cooling layers **40** and **41**.

The junction boxes **51** are elongated hollow structures, having orifices to which the conduits **42** connect. The cooling layers **40** and **41** surround the upper portion of each junction box **51**. The bottom of each junction box **51**, however, extends through the cooling layers **40** and **41**, downward along the ballast portion **36**. In this regard, the bottom of each box **51** preferably extends below the water's surface, when the boom section **32** is deployed.

The bottom of each junction box **51** includes an orifice to which a flexible jumper conduit **54** connects. The jumper conduit **54** connects one junction box **51** to another, from one boom section **32** to another. The jumper conduits **54** thus provide for a supply of water to the conduits **42** of each boom section **32**, along the boom's length via the junction boxes **51**. FIG. **6** illustrates a pair of junction boxes **51**, shown removed from their respective boom sections **32**, connected together via a jumper conduit **54**.

FIG. **4** illustrates a side view of the boom **30**. Referring to FIG. **4**, a flexible feed conduit **56** connects the junction boxes **51** to an external supply of pressurized water. Specifically, one end of the feed conduit **56** includes a conventional connector **58**. The connector **58** connects the feed conduit **56** to an external source **59** of pressurized water. The other end of the feed conduit **56** connects to the bottom of a junction box **51**. Water from the feed conduit **56** enters this junction box **51**, and is distributed along the cooling layers **40** and **41** of each boom section **32** making up the boom **30**. That is, water flows from one boom section **32** to another, via the jumper conduits **54** that connect the junction box **51** of one boom section **32**, to the junction box of an adjacent boom section. Fluid conduits **42** in the cooling layers **40** and **41** receive water from the junction boxes **51**, and distribute the water through the cooling layers.

Preferably, the feed conduit **56** connects to a junction box **51** proximate the apex of the boom **30**. More particularly, the feed conduit **56** connects to a junction box **51** nearest the midpoint of the boom **30**. Thus, the water pressure from the conduits **42** in the cooling layers **40** and **41** will be the greatest around the boom's apex, where heat protection is generally the most critical. Ideally, one feed conduit **56**, extends to proximate the boom's apex, from each end of the boom **30**, and connects to the junction box **51** nearest the boom's midpoint. This provides a redundant system in the event of a feed conduit **56** becoming unable to deliver water for one reason or another.

The feed conduits **56** preferably extend along the boom **30**, along the ballast portion **36**. Hence, the feed conduits **56** will generally be immersed in water for protection from heat. Straps **60** tie the feed conduits **56** to the skirt **48**, along the length of the boom **30**. Conventional connectors (not shown) may be employed for connecting feed conduit sections from one boom section **32**, to another, rather than employing a single, longer feed conduit **56**.

With reference to FIG. **3**, each end of the boom section **32**, terminates in a connector plate **62**. The connector plate **62** runs from the bottom, to the top of each end of a boom section **32**. The fabric forming the flotation sections **38** and the cooling layers **40** and **41**, folds over, and fastens to the side of each connector plate **62**. A clamping bar or plate **64** clamps the fabric layers to the connector plate **62**. Specifically, conventional fastening devices **66**, such as bolts, rivets, staples, and/or etc. penetrate through the clamping plate **64**, the fabric layers, and the connector plate **62**, to fasten these items to one another.

The connector plates **62** provide support for the junction boxes **51**. In particular, brackets **68** extend from each connector plate **62** for supporting its respective junction box **51**.

Referring to FIG. **5**, the distal end of each connector plate **62** forms a channel **69** extending from the top to bottom of the plate. The channels **69** slidably interlock with one another for connecting one boom section **32** to another. When the channels **69** have interlocked, one or more conventional pins or other fastening devices **71** removably penetrate through the channels for helping to ensure they remain interlocked. For maneuvering the boom **30** for capturing and concentrating pollutants, a harness **73**, partially shown in FIG. **4**, connects to a connector plate **62** at each end of the boom, from a towing vessel. The feed conduit **56** connects to an external source of pressurized water **73**, such as from a pump or tank, at the harness **73**. Optionally, the feed conduit **56** may extend along the harness **73**, and onto the towing vehicle, to connect to the external source of pressurized water.

With reference to FIGS. **3** and **4**, the fabric forming the flotation sections **38**, extends downward to form a skirt **48**. The skirt **48** provides support for the ballast portion **36**. Specifically, the bottom edge of the skirt **48** includes a channel or pocket **70** extending for substantially the length of the boom section **32**. The pocket **70** holds a ballast/tension member **72**.

The ballast/tension member **72** is a conventional metal chain. The ballast/tension member **72** slidably extends through the pocket **70**, and fastens to the connector plates **62** at either end of a boom section **32**. The tension member **72** functions for permitting greater tension to be applied along the length of a boom section **32**. Since the tension member **72** is a metal chain, having a density substantially greater than that of water, the tension member **72** also functions to weight or ballast the lower end of the ballast portion **36**.

Additionally, each boom section **32** preferably includes an upper tension member **74** as best seen in FIG. **7**. The upper tension member **74** slidably extends along the bottom of the flotation sections **38**, between the cooling layers **40** and **41**. The upper tension member is preferably a wire cable, or a cord or rope formed of conventional high strength fibers sold under the trade name KEVLAR. The upper tension member **74** permits additional tension to be applied along the length of each boom section **32**. As shown in FIG. **4**, the ends of the upper tension member **74** fastens to the connector plate **62** at each end of a boom section **32**.

Booms in accordance with the present invention may include flotation sections that do not require inflation. For instance, FIG. **8** illustrates another preferred embodiment of a boom **76** in accordance with the present invention, having foam core flotation sections **78**. In particular, this core is preferably formed of a conventional polypropylene foam of small porosity, i.e., a micro-foam. These flotation sections **38** have an average density substantially less than that of water, and function for providing flotation.

As with the boom **30** of the previously described embodiment, the boom **76** preferably has a series of flotation sections **78** along its length, forming segments, for enhancing flexibility. That is, there is a short space between flotation section segments for better permitting the boom **76** to undulate with the water's surface when deployed, for "riding" over passing waves.

In most other respects also, the boom **76** is substantially identical to the boom **30** for the previously described embodiment. The only other principal difference, is that the boom **76** employs an optional, outer protective skin **80**.

Since, in many respects, the boom **76** is substantially identical to the boom **30** for the previously described embodiment, identical reference numerals between the two embodiments are used for indicating substantially identical corresponding components. A prime symbol (**'**), however, follows such identical reference numerals for the embodiment presently under discussion.

In this regard, the boom **76** employs cooling layers **40'** and **41'**, substantially identical to the cooling layers **40** and **41** for the previously described embodiment. Generally, the cooling layers **40'** and **41'** should provide sufficient protection. However, an outer protective skin **80** may be employed for additional durability. Specifically, the outer protective skin **80** provides additional protection against mechanical damage (i.e., abrasions, punctures, cuts, and etc.), and heat. Preferably, the outer skin **80** is formed from a conventional, high temperature resistance fabric. Fabrics of this type may include fiberglass materials, coated with silica, alumina and/or other ceramic compounds that are resistant to elevated temperatures. For even greater durability, the outer skin **80** may include a coating resistant to ultraviolet light.

The outer skin **80** is preferably formed of a single sheet, wrapped around the cooling layers **40'** and **41'**. The fastening devices **50'**, used to fasten the cooling layers **40'** and **41'** around the flotation section **78**, also maintain the outer skin **80** fastened around the cooling layers.

The foam core flotation sections **78** advantageously simplify the boom **76** relative to the boom **30** for the previously described embodiment. Specifically, these foam core flotation sections **78** do not require inflation, and thus do not have components for permitting inflation such as valves and air channels. The drawback, though, is that the flotation sections **78** therefore also do not deflate, such that the boom **76** requires more space when stowed between deployments.

The remainder of the components of the boom **76** are substantially identical to corresponding components in the boom **30** for the previously described embodiment. To avoid redundancy, a description of these components is accordingly not repeated. For this reason also, FIG. **8** illustrates primarily only the buoyant portion for the boom **76**.

Booms in accordance with the present invention may employ other conduit systems for actively providing fluid to cooling layers. For instance, FIG. **9** illustrates another preferred embodiment of a boom **82** in accordance with the present invention, having an alternative conduit arrangement.

The boom **82** employs several components substantially identical to those for the previously described embodiments. Identical reference numerals are used for the boom **82**, and the previously described embodiments, to indicate substantially identical, corresponding components, with the double prime symbol (") following reference numerals for the embodiment presently under discussion.

In this regard, the boom **82** employs foam core flotation sections **78"** substantially identical to those in the boom **76** for the previously described embodiment. However, the boom **82** includes a fluid conduit **84** that extends through the flotation sections **78"**.

The conduit **84** extends through the foam core, proximate the side of the core nearest the boom's ballast portion **86**. The conduit **84** includes risers **88** extending upward from the main body of the conduit at periodic intervals along the conduit's length. Each risers **88** terminates at a location between the cooling layers **40"** and **41"**. These cooling layers **40"** and **41"** are substantially identical to those in the boom **76** of the just previously described embodiment. (The boom **82** also includes an outer protective skin **80"** substantially identical to the protective skin for the boom **76** of the just previously described embodiment).

A dispersion cap **90** connects to the top of each riser **88**. Each cap **90** directs fluid from its respective riser **88**, outward into the cooling layers **40"** and **41"**, for greater dispersal of fluid. The caps **90** correspond generally in shape to arcuate, rectangular segments. Referring to FIG. **10**, the caps **90** include an internal channel for dispersing fluid into the cooling layers **40"** and **41"**.

The conduit **84** connects to junction boxes (not shown) as in the previously described embodiments for receiving and/or providing water from one boom section to another. The junction boxes are substantially identical to those previously described, with the exception they have less orifices. In this regard, the boom **82** is simplified in that it has a single conduit **84** passing through the buoyant portion, rather than the complexity of multiple conduits as in previously described embodiments. Thus, the junction boxes do not require as many orifices.

The conduit **84**, risers **88**, and dispersion caps **90** for the boom **82** are preferably formed of a conventional, heat-resistant, material. These items, however, are not manufactured to be fluid permeable, that is there is no "weeping" of water as in the conduits **42** and **42'** of the previously described embodiments.

The ballast portion **86** for the boom **82** includes a modification relative to the boom **76** for the previously described embodiment. More particularly, the ballast portion **86** includes a skirt **92** extending downward from the buoyant portion **96** for the boom **82**. This skirt **92** is in many respects substantially the same as the skirts **48** and **48'** of the previously described embodiments, and is in fact formed of the same material these skirts. Additionally, the skirt **92** includes a lower pocket and ballast/tension member (not shown), substantially identical to corresponding components for the previously described embodiments.

The skirt **92**, however, includes an upper channel or pocket **94**, unlike the skirts **48** and **48'** of the previously described embodiments. The pocket **94** extends along the length of the ballast portion **96**, proximate the boom's buoyant portion **96**. Rather than having a tension member in the buoyant portion as in the booms for the previously described embodiments, the boom **82** includes a tension member **74"** in this upper pocket **94**. This tension member **74"** is substantially identical to the tension members **74** and **74'** of the previously described embodiments.

In other aspects, the boom **82** is substantially identical to the booms **30** and **76** for the previously described embodiments. To avoid redundancy, a description of these components is accordingly not repeated. For this reason also, FIG. **9** illustrates primarily only the buoyant portion **96** for the boom **82**, and the upper part of the ballast portion **86**.

FIG. **11** illustrates another preferred embodiment of a boom **98** in accordance with the present invention. FIG. **11** illustrates the boom **98** deploying from a spool or reel **100**, mounted to a vessel **102**. (FIG. **11** illustrates only a small portion of the vessel).

Referring to FIG. **12**, the boom **98** includes a buoyant portion **104**, and a weighted or ballast portion **106**. The principal components of the buoyant portion **104** include: (i) a series of compartments **108**, and (ii) at least one fluid conduit **110** for actively supplying (feeding) water along the boom for heat protection.

Each compartment **108** forms a hollow tube **112**. Viewed endwise, the tubes **112** form a shape corresponding generally to that of an American football, or a human eye. The tubes **112** connect to one another in side-by-side arrangement. In particular, the tubes **112** connect to one another, along the narrower side of each tube.

In operation, the boom **98** floats on the surface of a body of water, with the tubes **112** oriented generally vertically. Specifically, one end of each tube **112** connects to the ballast portion **106**, below the water's surface. The other end of the tube **112** extends more-or-less vertically upward, above the water's surface. The upper end of each tube **112** is open to the environment.

Each compartment **108** includes a flotation section formed of a foam core **114**. These cores **114** are preferably made from a conventional polypropylene foam of small porosity (i.e., a micro-foam), and have an average density substantially less than that of water for providing flotation.

Each core **114** mounts substantially coaxially within a tube **112**, to the tube's lower end. The cores **114** generally correspond in shape to the tubes **112**, but have minor and major axes of smaller dimensions. When mounted in a tube **112**, a gap thus separates the periphery of each core **114** from the inner periphery of each tube.

A tube or channel **116** runs along the bottom of the compartments **108**. That is, the channel **116** runs for substantially the length of the boom **98**, underneath the compartments **108**. The channel **116** has a generally circular cross-section, and forms part of both of the buoyant portion **104**, and the ballast portion **106**.

The tube **112** of each compartment **108**, mounts to the upper wall of the channel **116**. Likewise, the foam core **114** in each tube **112**, also mounts to the upper wall of the channel **116**. When the boom **98** deploys, the compartments **108** are thus positioned more-or-less directly above the channel **116**.

The fluid conduit **110** extends through the channel **116**, for substantially the boom's length. The fluid conduit **110** includes an end (not shown) adapted for connection to an external source of pressurized water, preferably water. The conduit **110** introduces the fluid into the channel **116**, through apertures along the length of the conduit.

Apertures **117** in the upper wall of the channel **116**, connect the channel and compartments **108** in fluid communication. Fluid from the channel **116** thus enters the compartments **108** through these apertures **117**. In particular, the fluid accumulates in the compartments **108**, and at least partially surrounds the foam cores **112**, for heat protection.

The ballast portion **106** for the boom **98** includes a chain **118** also extending through the channel **116**. The chain **118** is a conventional metal type, having an average density substantially greater than that of water. The chain **118** functions to weight or ballast the boom **98**, and/or for strength for resisting tension applied along the boom's length.

Referring to FIG. **11**, the end of the channel **116** includes a cap **120**. In alternative embodiments, provisions can be made for connecting this end of the boom **98** to another boom, or vessel, for facilitation of drawing the boom(s) into a configuration for capturing spilled pollutants, and/or applying lengthwise tension along the structure.

The material forming the tubes **112** for the flotation chambers **108**, and/or channel **116** is preferably a conventional, lightweight material having resistance to elevated temperatures. Materials of this type may include fiberglass materials, coated with silica, alumina and/or other ceramic compounds that increase resistance to elevated temperatures. Conventional materials of this type, are sold under the trade names of NEXTEL 440, manufactured by the 3-M Company of Minneapolis, Minn., or KAO-TEX 2500.

FIG. **13** illustrates a perspective view of a portion of another preferred embodiment of a boom **120** in accordance with the present invention. The boom **120** includes features as in the boom of the first described embodiment. In particular, the boom **120** includes an active cooling system for heat protection.

As with the first described embodiment, the boom **120** includes shorter boom sections that connect in an end-to-end arrangement to form the boom. If one section becomes damaged, that section can thus be replaced without requiring replacement of the entire boom **120**. The boom **120**, however, has modifications, relative to the first described embodiment, for connecting one boom section to another. FIG. **13** illustrates an end portion of a boom section for the boom **120**.

The boom **120** has a buoyant portion **122**, and a skirt or ballast portion **124** as in the first described embodiment. Namely, the buoyant portion **122** includes a series of flotation sections **126** for providing flotation. Each flotation section **126** is formed from an air-filled bladder or chamber. The air chambers are formed in the same manner and from the same material as for the first described embodiment. That is, from a folded-over sheet of material extending for substantially the length of the boom section. The layers of the material are heat-sealed together at selected locations to define each flotation section chamber.

This fabric additionally extends downward to form a skirt **128** below the buoyant portion **122**. The skirt **128** provides support for the ballast portion **124**.

The buoyant portion **122** also includes cooling layers **130** and **132** as in the first described embodiment. The cooling layers **130** and **132** are formed in substantially the same manner and from the same material as for the first described embodiment. In particular, each cooling layer is formed from a sheet of hydrophilic, water absorbing, heat resistant material. The cooling layers **130** and **132** fasten around the sheet forming the flotation sections **126** in an arrangement similar to a French cuff, below the buoyant portion **122**.

In the first described embodiment, the fabric forming the flotation sections and cooling layers, folded over and fastened to a plate at each end of a boom section. The present embodiment under discussion does not include such plates.

Instead, the cooling layers **130** and **132** form a hollow, substantially cylindrical projection extending from the

buoyant portion **122** of the end of the boom section. At one end of a boom section, the recess is designed to be a female fitting, and accepts the cylindrical projection of another boom section in a sliding fit. Conversely, the opposite end of the boom section forms a male fitting, for penetration into the female cylindrical recess of another boom section. The buoyant portions **122** of boom sections thus connect together in an arrangement similar to piping.

Conventional hook and loop type fasteners **134** of the type commonly sold under the trade name VELCRO, help to maintain the interfitting cylindrical projections connected to one another. More particularly, hook and/or loop type fasteners are disposed around the inner periphery of each female cylindrical projection, and around the outer periphery of each male cylindrical projection. The hook and loop fasteners are preferably formed of a conventional heat-resistant material, such as NOMEX, and may be formed integral with the material of the cooling layers **130** and **132**.

The edges of the folded-over sheet of material forming the flotation sections **126** and skirt **128** for the boom **120**, are heat sealed together at the ends of each boom section. The heat-sealed edges further include a strip of conventional VELCRO hook and loop type fasteners **136**. The VELCRO fastening strip **136** extends from the top, to the bottom, of the boom **120**, and is preferably formed of a conventional heat-resistant material, such as NOMEX.

The VELCRO at the end of the boom sections, helps to maintain the end of one boom section connected to another. Boom section ends having a male cylindrical projection include VELCRO loop fasteners, and the opposite female end includes VELCRO hook fasteners, or vice versa. Alternatively, each end may include a combination arrangement of both VELCRO hook and loop fasteners.

The boom **120** additionally includes upper and lower tension members **138** and **140** that aid in connecting one boom section to another. The tension members **138** and **140** are substantially identical to tension members for the first described embodiments, with one primary exception. Namely, the tension members **138** and **140** for the boom **120**, include at each end a conventional clevis or other type connector **142**. This connector **142** fastens the end of one tension member **138** or **140**, to the end of a corresponding tension member, on an adjacent boom section.

The lower tension member **140** is a conventional metal chain, which also serves as a ballast. The lower tension member **140** slidably extends through a channel or pocket **139** along the bottom edge of the skirt **128** for the boom **120**. The upper tension member **138** is a cord or rope formed from KEVLAR fibers. The upper tension member slidably extends through loops **144** along the lower side the boom's buoyant portion **122**.

The boom **120** includes fluid conduits substantially identical to corresponding fluid conduits in the first described embodiment, with one principal exception. Namely, the conduits include conventional quick-disconnect ends for connecting a fluid conduit to a corresponding conduit in another boom section. At one end, a conduit terminates in a female-type quick disconnect end, and at the other end, the conduit terminates in a male-type quick-disconnect end. The quick-disconnect ends are preferably of the type that substantially seal the end of the conduit, when disconnected.

In that regard, the boom **120** includes fluid conduits **146** extending between the cooling layers **130** and **132**, as in first described embodiment. The conduits **146** do not terminate at a junction box as in the first described embodiment, but rather in conventional quick-disconnect ends **148** at each

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end of a boom section as described above. Specifically, the ends **148** of the conduits **146** project beyond the edges of the cooling layers **130** and **132** at each boom section end, for connection to corresponding conduits in another boom section.

As described above, a quick-disconnect end **148** preferably substantially seals the end of its respective conduit, when disconnected. This is especially advantageous for conduit ends **148** that are not adjacent to another boom section, such as for ends nearest a boom towing vessel. Alternatively, such conduits ends **148** may be substantially sealed with a conventional plug or other device.

The boom **120** includes a feed conduit **150** as in the first described embodiment. The feed conduit **150** extends along the skirt **128**, above the lower tension member **140**. In particular, the feed conduit **150** extends through straps **152** along the skirt **128**, for maintaining the feed conduit against the skirt. At each end of a boom section, the feed conduit **150** terminates in a conventional quick-disconnect **154**. The quick-disconnect **154** functions to removably connect a feed conduit **150** of one boom section, to the feed conduit of an adjacent boom section. The quick-disconnect **150** additionally functions for removably connecting the end of a boom section nearest a towing vessel, to a source of pressurized water available from the vessel.

In another modification relative to the first described embodiment, the boom **120** includes a conventional air valve **153** for each flotation section **126**. Each air valve **153** mounts to the skirt **128** for a boom section, below the flotation section **126** corresponding to that valve. An air channel **155** leads from each valve **153** to the flotation section **126** corresponding to that valve. The air channels **155** are formed by selectively heat sealing areas of fabric in the folded-over material forming the flotation sections **126** and skirt **128**. The provision of a valve **153** for each flotation section **126** may require more time to inflate all of the flotation sections, but provides greater control for deflating flotation sections when stowing the boom **120**. For instance, the boom **120** may be stowed on a reel when not deployed, and the use of a valve for each flotation section provides better control in ensuring that a flotation section **126** has been deflated, before that portion of the boom is wound onto the reel.

Referring to FIG. **14**, the boom **120** includes a special boom section for supplying water from the feed conduit **150** to the fluid conduits **146** in the buoyant portion **122**. As discussed previously, heat protection is generally the most critical at the boom's apex. The special boom section should therefore be located at the apex of the boom **120** to maximize water pressure in the conduits **146** in the cooling layers **130** and **132** in this area.

The boom section shown in FIG. **14** includes a tee **156** that divides the feed conduit **150** into two halves. At approximately the central portion of the boom section, each half of the feed conduit **150** connects to an end of the tee **156**. A riser **158** extends upward from the remaining end of the tee **156**, through the skirt **128**, to the buoyant portion **122** of the boom **120**. The riser **158** enters into the buoyant portion **122**, in the space between two flotation sections **126**. In this space, the riser **158** connects to one end of a second tee **160**.

The remaining ends of the second tee **160** connect to each of the fluid conduits **146** disposed within the buoyant portion **122**. More particularly, the second tee **160** divides each of the fluid conduits **146** into two halves. Each half of a fluid conduit **146** connects to a corresponding port on an end of

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the second tee **160**. In this way, the feed conduit **150** supplies pressurized water to the fluid conduits **146** in the buoyant portion **122** for the special boom section.

The tees **156** and **160** are preferably made of conventional materials that are resistant to elevated temperatures. The second or upper tee **160** may include perforations along its body for ensuring an adequate supply of cooling water to the cooling layers in the area around the tee.

For towing the boom **120**, the boom section tension members **138** and **140** would connect to lines from a boom towing vessel. Alternatively, the boom **120** could include special boom towing sections. Such towing sections, would have a connector plate as in the first described embodiment, but without supporting a junction box **51**. The fabric layers in the boom section would fold over and fasten to this connector plate, and a towing harness from a vessel would attach to the plate. The other end of the boom section, would be as described in the preceding paragraphs.

FIG. **15** illustrates a perspective view of a portion of another preferred embodiment of a boom **170** in accordance with the present invention. The boom **170** includes features as in the first described embodiment, such as an active cooling system for heat protection. The boom **170** also includes shorter boom sections that connect in an end-to-end arrangement to form the boom as in the first described embodiment. If one section becomes damaged, that section can thus be replaced without requiring replacement of the entire boom **170**.

FIG. **15** illustrates an end portion of a boom section for the boom **170**. Each boom section terminates in a connector plate **172**. The connector plate **172** is substantially identical to the connector plate **62** in the first described embodiment (i.e., the plate includes a channel that slidably interlocks with the connector plate on an adjacent boom section for connecting one boom section to another). The connector plates **172** for the boom **170**, however, do not support junction boxes **51** as in the first described embodiment.

As with the first described embodiment, the boom **170** includes a buoyant portion **174** and a skirt or ballast portion **176**. The buoyant portion **174** includes a series of flotation sections **178** for providing flotation. Each flotation section **178** is formed from an air-filled bladder or chamber in substantially the same manner and from the same material as for the first described embodiment.

The material forming the flotation sections **178** additionally extends downward to form a skirt **180** below the buoyant portion **178**, as in the first described embodiment. The skirt **180** provides support for the ballast portion **176**.

The buoyant portion **174** also includes cooling layers as in the first described embodiment (not shown). The cooling layers are formed in substantially the same manner and from the same material as the first described embodiment. Namely, from two sheets of hydrophilic, water absorbing, heat resistant material. The material forming the flotation sections **178** and cooling layers, folds over and fastens to the connector plate **172** at each end of a boom section.

The boom **170** additionally includes fluid conduits **182** extending along each boom section, between the cooling layers. The fluid conduits **182** are substantially identical to corresponding fluid conduits in the first described embodiment, with one principal exception. Specifically, the fluid conduits **182** do not terminate at a junction box at each end of a boom section. At the end of a boom section, each fluid conduit **182** "dead-ends" and terminates in a cap or plug.

For supplying the fluid conduits **182** with a pressurized source of water, the boom **170** includes a feed conduit **184**

as in the first described embodiment, with one primary exception. At each end of a boom section, the feed conduit **184** terminates in a conventional quick-disconnect **186**. The quick-disconnect **186** functions to removably connect a feed conduit **184** of one boom section, to the feed conduit of an adjacent boom section. The quick-disconnect **186** additionally functions for removably connecting the end of a boom section nearest a towing vessel, to an external source of pressurized water.

The skirt **180** for each boom section, defines a pocket or channel **188** in which the feed conduit **184** is disposed. At each end of a boom section, the feed conduit **184** projects from the channel **188**, for connection to another feed conduit or to an external source of pressurized water.

Referring to FIG. 16, each boom section includes risers **190**, located at around the mid-point of the boom section, connected to the feed conduit **184**. The risers **190** supply water from the feed conduit **184** to the fluid conduits **182** in the cooling layers.

In particular, the base of each riser **190** connects in fluid communication to the feed conduit **184**. More particularly, the feed conduit **184** includes at approximately its midpoint, a coupler section **194**, from which the risers **190** extend. The top of each riser **190** extends upward through the skirt **180** into the boom's buoyant portion **174**. In a space between two flotation sections **178**, the risers **190** each form a tee **192**.

The tee **192** for each riser **190**, divides each fluid conduit **182** in the buoyant portion **174** into two halves. One half of a fluid conduit **182** connects to one end of a tee **192**, and the other half connects to the opposite end of the tee. In this way, each fluid conduit **182** in the buoyant section **174** connects in fluid communication to the feed conduit **184**.

There is an engineering tradeoff in the foregoing arrangement in that water pressure will not necessarily be greatest in the cooling layer conduits **182** at the apex of the boom **170**, where heat protection is usually the most critical. Notwithstanding, it results in less complexity and avoids the necessity for a special apex boom section, and should provide sufficient water around the boom for heat protection.

There is another engineering tradeoff in that the multiple risers **190** and tees **192** in FIG. 16, arguably add complexity, relative to a single riser/tee arrangement such as an arrangement similar to that shown in FIG. 14. In this regard, the multiple riser/tee arrangement facilitates routing of the risers **190** through the skirt **180** because the risers have smaller diameters. The arrangement should additionally result in a more flexible structure.

Referring to FIG. 15, each boom section includes upper and lower tension members **195** and **196** as in the first described embodiment. The lower tension member **196** is a conventional chain, disposed in pocket or channel **198** defined along the lower edge of the skirt **180**. The upper tension member **195** is a cord or rope formed from Kevlar fibers, disposed in a pocket or channel **200** in the skirt **180** below the buoyant portion **174**. At each end of a boom section, the tension members **195** and **196** fasten to the connector plate **172** at that end of the boom section.

In other features, the boom **170** preferably includes a conventional valve (not shown) for each flotation section, as described in the previous embodiment, for inflating and deflating its respective flotation section.

Generally, a water supply on the order of 100 gallons per minute for the described booms, should provide sufficient heat protection. In this regard, the feed conduits preferably have a diameter of about two inches, and fluid conduits in the buoyant portions of the described booms should each

have a diameter of approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. In embodiments having multiple riser arrangements, the risers should have a diameter of around $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inches also. In embodiments having single riser arrangements, and/or a jumper conduit, the risers and/or jumper conduits should have a diameter of approximately two inches.

While preferred embodiments of the invention have been illustrated and described, it will be appreciated that various changes can be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. For instance, the last described embodiment could incorporate the arrangement for the tees shown in FIG. 14, in place of the riser arrangement of FIG. 16.

Further, the boom **120** of FIG. 13 could be composed of boom sections that all have the tee arrangement of FIG. 14, rather than just a boom section at the apex of this boom. This would result in less complexity in having only one type of boom section for this embodiment, but has the drawback of not providing the greatest water pressure at the boom's apex for conduits in the cooling layers.

In another alternative arrangement, the boom **30** of the first described embodiment could be made without boom sections **32**. That is, the boom **30** could be one continuous length, which would simplify the boom by eliminating the need for multiple connector plates **62**, jumper conduits **54**, and other items. Damage to a small part of such a boom, however, could require replacement of the entire boom, rather than just a single section.

Moreover, booms in accordance with the present invention could be made with a single, continuous flotation sections extending along the length of a boom section, or even along the entire length of a boom. Such flotation sections would likely simplify boom production, but at the cost of decreasing boom flexibility, i.e., the ability of the boom to "ride" over passing waves.

Fluid conduits for supplying fluid to cooling layers in a boom could be fluid have small apertures for emitting fluid, rather than being made fluid permeable. Also, flotation sections could be formed using a combination of inflatable chambers and foam material.

In view of the alterations, substitutions and modifications that could be made by one of ordinary skill in the art, it is intended that the scope of letters patent granted hereon be limited only by the definitions of the appended claims.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A boom for floating on the surface of a body of water, for use in collecting a substance floating on the water's surface, the boom comprising:

- (a) a flotation section, having an average density substantially less than that of water for providing flotation;
- (b) water distribution means, at least partially surrounding the flotation section, the water distribution means being for distributing water around the flotation section for protecting the boom from heat; and
- (c) pressurized water supply means for placing the water distribution means in fluid communication with a pressurized supply of water, for receipt of water by the water distribution means, for protecting the boom from heat.

2. The boom of claim 1, wherein the pressurized water supply means includes a fluid conduit extending substantially along the length of the boom for supplying the water along the length of the boom, the fluid conduit having an end adapted for connection in fluid communication to the pressurized supply of water.

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3. The boom of claim 1, wherein the pressurized water supply means includes a plurality of fluid conduits extending substantially along the length of the boom.

4. The boom of claim 1, wherein the water distribution means, includes a space surrounding the flotation section, wherein the space accumulates water from the water distribution means.

5. The boom of claim 1, wherein the water distribution means includes a material substantially permeable to water for receiving and accumulating water from the pressurized water supply means for protecting the boom from heat.

6. The boom of claim 1, wherein the boom includes a plurality of flotation sections extending substantially along the length of the boom.

7. The boom of claim 1, wherein the pressurized water supply means includes a conduit extending through the flotation section of the boom.

8. A boom for floating on the surface of a body of water, for use in collecting a substance on the water's surface, and for connecting to a pressurized supply of water for protecting the boom from heat, the boom comprising:

(a) a flotation section having an average density substantially less than that of water for providing flotation; and

(b) at least one fluid conduit, wherein the boom includes a length, the at least one fluid conduit extending substantially along the length of the boom, and being in fluid communication with the boom, along the boom's length, for supplying water along the length of the boom for protecting the boom from heat, the at least one fluid conduit having an end adapted for connection in fluid communication to the pressurized supply of water.

9. The boom of claim 8, further comprising a ballast having an average density substantially greater than that of water, wherein the flotation section includes opposite sides, and the at least one fluid conduit extends substantially along the length of the boom, to one side of the flotation section, and the ballast extends substantially along the length of the boom, to the other side of the flotation section.

10. The boom of claim 8, further comprising water distribution means at least partially surrounding the flotation section, for receiving and distributing water from the at least one fluid conduit for protecting the boom from heat.

11. The boom of claim 8, further comprising a cooling layer at least partially surrounding the flotation section, wherein at least a portion of the cooling layer is substantially fluid permeable for receiving and distributing water from the at least one fluid conduit for protecting the boom from heat.

12. The boom of claim 8, further comprising a plurality of flotation sections extending substantially along the length of the boom.

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13. The boom of claim 8, further comprising a plurality of fluid conduits extending along the length of the boom.

14. The boom of claim 8, wherein the flotation section includes at least one bladder for receiving and containing air for providing flotation for the boom.

15. The boom of claim 8, wherein the at least one fluid conduit extends through the flotation section of the boom.

16. A boom for floating on the surface of a body of water, for use in collecting a substance on the water's surface, the boom comprising:

(a) a buoyant portion including:

(i) a flotation section having an average density substantially less than that of water, for providing flotation for the boom, the flotation section having opposite sides;

(ii) a cooling layer at least partially surrounding the flotation section, wherein at least a portion of the cooling layer is substantially fluid permeable for receiving and distributing water for protecting the boom from heat; and

(iii) at least one fluid conduit, wherein the boom includes a length, the at least one fluid conduit extending substantially along the length of the boom to one side of the flotation section, the at least one fluid conduit being in fluid communication with the cooling layer for supplying the cooling layer with water; and

(b) a ballast portion connected to the buoyant portion, the ballast portion extending from the buoyant portion, to the side of the flotation section opposite the at least one fluid conduit, wherein the ballast portion has an average density substantially greater than that of water.

17. The boom of claim 16, wherein the boom further includes another cooling layer, extending at least partially over the other cooling layer, with the at least one fluid conduit extending between the cooling layers.

18. The boom of claim 16, further comprising a plurality of fluid conduits extending substantially along the length of the boom.

19. The boom of claim 16, wherein the flotation section includes at least one bladder for receiving and holding air for providing flotation for the boom.

20. The boom of claim 16, wherein the boom is for connecting to a pressurized supply of water, the at least one fluid conduit including an end adapted for connection to the pressurized supply of water.

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